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Public Health Reports

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UNITED STATES.

Yellow fever in Key West, Fla.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1899.

Thursday afternoon, August 31, word was received from Assistant Surgeon McAdam, marine hospital, Key West, Fla., that Dr. Sweeting, the State quarantine officer, reported 2 cases of yellow fever in the city and several suspicious cases.

September 1 (Friday), Dr. McAdam wires that 2 more suspicious cases developed last night at the hotel at Key West, and the inmates were quarantined. Last night he reported 4 new cases in different parts of the city, 1 moribund, and a number of suspicious cases.

• Immediately on receiving the information, late Thursday afternoon, Dr. McAdam was directed by wire to see that the Treasury regulations were enforced in Key West, and to prepare a list of people who had left Key West within the last two weeks; made the same request of the Plant Line of steamers on the west coast of Florida and the Flagler Line on the east coast. As soon as these names are received the authorities at the places of destination will be notified in order that persons from Key West may be kept under observation for ten days. There should be no alarm caused by this measure, which is simply one of precaution.

The same evening the Surgeon-General had a conference with the representatives of the Plant Line steamers in Washington and they agreed to take no passengers at all from Key West. He also wired the president of the Flagler Line at St. Augustine, notifying him that the vessel which usually leaves Friday night for Key West should not be allowed to go,

as the quarantine regulations would require disinfection and detention of the vessel on her return. Arrangements will be provided for delivering mails and necessary supplies to Key West on floats some distance from the shore.

The same night that he received the information (Thursday) The Surgeon-General notified all the quarantine officers of the South. He wired also State Health Officer Porter at Jacksonville for information as to what measures had been taken by the State authorities. In the meantime word was received from Assistant Surgeon McAdam, at Key West, that all possible precautions had been taken.

As it was deemed necessary to have an expert in Key West, Surgeon Carter, at Havana, was directed to proceed there for temporary duty. He immediately obtained a tugboat, and announced his arrival at Key West this (Saturday) morning at 2 o'clock. P. A. Surg. M. J. Rosenau takes his place temporarily at Havana.

September 2: Assistant Surgeon McAdam reports as follows: "One death last night, no new cases reported this morning. Surgeon Carter has advised regarding list of persons having left recently. Am canvassing hotels and boarding houses."

An agreement has been arrived at with the Navy Department by which some 60 marines and naval employees will be taken on board a naval vessel to Portsmouth, N. H.

The removal of the troops at Key West has been ordered by the War Department, but no information has yet been received as to the details. Surgeon Carter reports that the troops have been isolated and quarantined in their barracks since the first report of yellow fever. In the meantime preparations are being made to open the detention camp recently removed from Egmont Key to Mullet Key. It may not be necessary to utilize this camp, but preparations are nevertheless being made. Assistant Surgeon Corput is in charge of the camp on Mullet Key, and has Assistant Surgeon Trotter with him. Dr. Geo. A. Sheldon, an immune, has been ordered from Mobile to report at the camp. Hospital Steward Peck has been detached from duty at Hampton and directed to proceed to the detention camp at Mullet Key. Surg. G. M. Magruder has been ordered from Memphis, Tenn., to Port Tampa, Fla., to supervise the operations of the Service from that point. Acting Assistant Surgeon Atree, of Tampa City, in the meantime is meeting vessels arriving at Port Tampa and keeping close watch on all communication from Key West. P. A. Surg. W. G. Simpson has been ordered from Old Point to Miami, Fla., to represent the Service on the east coast.

The State health officer telegraphs, September 2—

Detention camps for nonimmunes from Key West at Tampa Bay and Miami wanted and will be appreciated. From advices, judge infection is very general over Key West, and proper method to check and stamp out is indicated by thorough depopulation of nonimmunes.

Can you assist in effecting? Think can provide temporarily for Miami by river steamer accommodating 36, on which new disinfecting plant is located, if you will help out in maintenance. Think island should be patrolled by water to prevent emigration of suspects to neighboring keys and mainland. I have no boat, *Germ* sold. Will arrive at Key West to-morrow afternoon.

Assistant Surgeon McAdam reports that the tugs *Nezinscot* for Port Royal and *Potomac* for Portsmouth, N. H., left last night with most of the force from the naval station. Small launch left for Elliots Key this morning with 6 or 7 passengers. Four schooners in the past ten days have gone to the mainland; probably only immunes on board. List of departures agrees with steamship companies' lists so far as determined.

The quarantine officer at Port Royal, S. C., is informed that the tug *Nezinscot*, which left Key West last night for Port Royal with part of force from naval station, Key West, should be quarantined.

September 5: The quarantine officer at Port Royal is directed to remand the *Nezinscot* to South Atlantic Quarantine.

September 3: Deputy Collector of Customs Barr is telegraphed as follows:

Passed Assistant Surgeon Stimpson will reach Miami to-morrow. Kindly give him all assistance possible. Look out for people from Elliots Key. Launch left Key West yesterday morning for this key with 6 or 7 passengers. They should be detained.

Deputy Collector of Customs Barr reports from Miami, Fla., that State Health Officer Jackson is carefully watching the situation. That launch was dispatched this morning by the latter to catch passengers to Elliots Key and that he is acting with the custom-house vigilantly.

Dr. Porter is telegraphed as follows:

Detention camp on Mullet Key will be ready in two or three days. Possibly, Tortugas might be used as detention camp. Will wire definitely concerning this later. Regarding subsistence for detention steamer at Miami, can not make expenditures except through Service officer.

Surgeon Carter is directed to wire details of boat patrol, and what vessels were in use.

September 4: Recommend Tortugas for camp for four weeks service. Put on water guard early yesterday morning, Sweating concurring. Chartered 2 launches, perfected to-day by adding a schooner. Porter asks me to continue it. [I] recommend it, and do so pending action of Bureau. Schooner with boats anchored in Man-of-War Harbor—launches in other channels—no egress without pratique. For this need navy launch and *Gamma*. *Dora* needed if available.

Surgeon Carter is informed that Tortugas would be opened as detention camp—that arrangements were being made with the Plant Line to transport equipage from Mullet direct to Tortugas for one hundred people.

Assistant Surgeon Corput at Mullet Key is directed to ship by to-

night's boat to Clarke at Tortugas, tentage and floors, outfits, including bedding, cooking and dining room utensils for one hundred people. Steward Peck to assist. Arrangements made with Plant Line to transfer material.

Assistant Surgeon Fricks' orders to New Orleans revoked and he is to proceed to Key West and report to McAdam.

The State health office of Florida is informed that all preparations have been made for opening Tortugas as a detention camp, which is thought sufficient for egress from Key West; that arrangements are being made for revenue cutter and navy launches; the tug *Neminscot* can be obtained after her arrival at Port Royal, and the patrol instituted by Carter will be continued.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Sheldon is ordered to Tortugas. Passed Assistant Surgeon Smith is ordered from Hampton, Va., to Tortugas to take charge of the detention camp. Surgeon Carter reports to date (night of 4th) 28 cases and 3 deaths from yellow fever at Key West.

September 5: Surgeon Carter reports to date 50 cases and 6 deaths.

September 5: Passed Assistant Surgeon Stimpson reports a mild case of yellow fever at Miami in the person of a refugee from Key West. The case has been isolated five days, and all precautions taken against the spread of the disease.

September 6: Surgeon Carter reports to date 64 cases and 6 deaths.

Surgeon Carter is telegraphed as follows:

Papers state Porter wired State board, Jacksonville, to direct various State quarantine officers to redisinfect all vessels coming from Government quarantine stations. Wire meaning of this.

Surgeon Carter replies:

Porter says measure taken as temporary expedient to prevent panic and distrust believed imminent at Pensacola. No distrust felt and none intended by him. He sees and agrees to this. Authorizes you to use this to health officials. Asks not to publish it.

September 7: Passed Assistant Surgeon Cumming reports the arrival of the *Nezinscot* at South Atlantic Quarantine, via Port Royal, with 21 men on board, five days out from Key West—all well. Held for disinfection. Assistant Surgeon McAdam reports to date, 96 cases and 7 deaths.

September 8: Assistant Surgeon Clarke telegraphs that the detention camp at Tortugas is ready for occupation.

Yellow fever in New Orleans.

September 8: Dr. Edmond Souchon, president of the Louisiana State board of health, reports as follows: "One new case, mild, making third only. Isolated and under control. Second case convalescent. Returns from 75 physicians show no other case. Inspection continues. State board was in session to-day—parish members present. Decided quarantine not necessary."